

**REMARKS**

This amendment is believed to be fully responsive to this office action of September 10, 2003. It is requested that matters as to form that have not been addressed in this response be held in abeyance until allowable subject matter is indicated. Reconsideration, further examination, entry of the above amendments, and allowance is respectfully requested in view of the above amendments which address the points in the Examiner's as follows:

***Examiner Interview***

The applicants thank Examiner Rada for the time spent during the interview of January 29, 2004. The applicant discussed proposed changes to claim 1, which would be reflected in all independent claims, to distinguish the invention from LeVasseur and Moody. Specifically, the discussion centered around the fact that LeVasseur and Moody both use the first to cards that are dealt to a player to form what has been interpreted by the PTO as being "player hands". The above amendments clarify that the disclosed invention uses at least two player hands, each player hand being formed from a distinct pair of cards dealt at the beginning of the game.

***Claim Rejections -35 U.S.C. § 102***

Claims 1 and 2 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102 as

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being anticipated by LeVasseur. LeVasseur teaches the use of only one player's hand, which is played over and over against the dealer's hands, which are formed from the same original "up-card". The instant invention as claimed in independent claims 1, 7, and 12 uses a distinct pair of cards for each player's hand. Accordingly, the claimed invention is not the same invention as LeVasseur, and LeVasseur does not anticipate the claimed invention.

Support for the use of two or more player's hand is found on page 17, second full paragraph of the written specification as filed.

*Claim Rejections -35 U.S.C. § 103*

Claims 1-15 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103 as being obvious under LeVasseur in view of Vuong '552, Moody '335, or Keller '575. None of these references, alone or in combination, teach or suggest the use of multiple player hands as claimed herein. Still further, the use of these multiple player hands in conjunction with the use of multiple dealers is simply not found. Both LeVasseur and Moody use the first two cards (single pair) that were dealt to the player, and do not teach or suggest a method that would use more than one pair of cards initially dealt to create separate "player's hands" that are then used for separate wager and play by a single person. This greatly enhances

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the productivity of the casino by allowing the prompt processing of multiple wagers at a single location in a blackjack device.

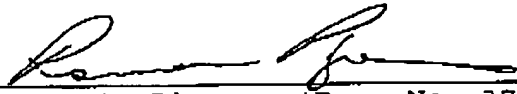
Additionally, Vuong and Keller do not teach or suggest the use of multiple player's hands as described herein. Accordingly, claims 1-15 have been distinguished over the prior art, and advancement to allowance is respectfully requested.

### CONCLUSION

In view of the above, it is submitted that the applicant has placed this application in condition for allowance. Further examination, abeyance of any remaining informalities, and reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections and objections raised in the Examiner's Office Action is requested. Moreover, it is submitted that the claims are now in condition for allowance, and that allowance of the present application is in order and is also requested.

Should the Examiner deem that any further amendment is desirable to place this application in condition for allowance, the examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at the number listed below.

Respectfully submitted this 10<sup>th</sup> day of February, 2004,

  
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### CERTIFICATE OF MAILING

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the U.S. Postal Service as first class mail in an envelope addressed to: Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450, on this 10<sup>th</sup> day of February, 2004.

  
Ramon L. Pizarro

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